

May 2014 Issue

April 27 – 29, 2014 Shelby County Dodged Tornado Outbreak

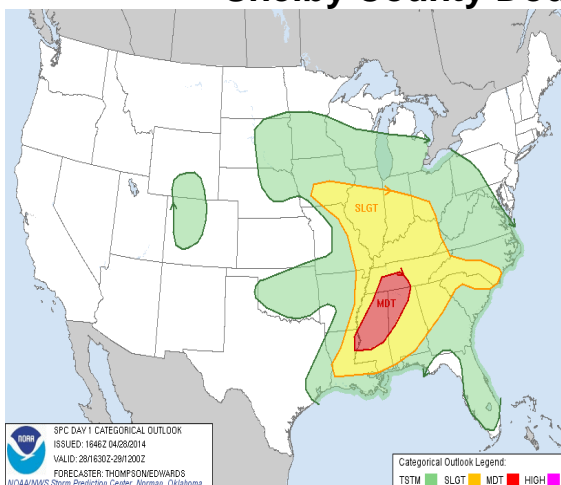


Photo caption: Storm Prediction Center put Shelby Co. in the "slight" risk category for thunderstorms



Flash flooding on Belvedere in Midtown April 27

On April 27, 2014, the National Weather Service (NWS) predicted a multi-day, multi-state severe thunderstorm event for the MidSouth with a tornado outbreak. Director Bob Nations, Jr. and staff from the Shelby County Office of Preparedness went on high alert communicating with the NWS for possible escalation of severe weather. The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) activation was raised to a Level 4, "Elevated." A wind advisory, a flash flood watch, and flash flood warning preceded heavy rains pelting Shelby County. In the evening, a tornado watch was issued for Shelby and 7 counties in West Tennessee, northeast Arkansas, and southeast Missouri extending into April 28. According to the NWS, several brutal tornadoes touched down killing 1 in northeast Oklahoma and 15 north of Little Rock, Arkansas from a long track tornado that grew to a half mile wide.



Photo caption: Low clouds before rain April 27



1598 Perkins, a massive tree on power lines

April 28, 2014 the Storm Prediction Center placed Shelby County in the “slight” risk category. The NWS warned of an outbreak of “severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.” A tornado watch and wind advisory remained in effect, a flash flood watch was issued with 3 to 5 inches of rain predicted, and a severe thunderstorm warning was issued to produce quarter size hail and damaging winds of 60 mph. At 6:50 a.m. with skies darkening and outdoor warning sirens blaring, a tornado warning was issued as radar indicated a tornado near Millington. MLGW’s outage map reported outages of 4,433 at 7:14 a.m. and rose to 10,000 customers with no power at 11:30 a.m. as the storm progressed. MLGW reported five downed circuits. An abnormally high number of lightning strikes were reported by WREG TV - 1,158 strikes in a 15 minute period. Lightning struck the Shelby County East Complex twice, a tree and a utility pole on Mullins Station Road. The Emergency Operations Center and 911 Call Center were immediately switched to generator power while the pole was replaced and power lines repaired. TEMA’s activation rose to a level 3 or “State of Emergency” due to an “outbreak of severe storms producing strong, damaging winds.” While Shelby County sustained some minor wind damage and flash flooding, the tornado outbreak fortunately did not occur here. However, a Particularly Dangerous Situation or “PSD” Tornado Warning and a Tornado Emergency Warning were issued for other counties in Tennessee and Mississippi. At least 25 are confirmed dead in Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi after the storms passed. As of 7:00 a.m. on April 30, only 1 MLGW customer is without power.



Photo caption: Lightning strikes a tree on Shelby County Complex East during a severe thunderstorm



Lightning struck a pole on Mullins Station causing Emergency Operations Center to use generator power

Tornado Safety: Learn to Survive!

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness urges citizens to plan ahead to know what to do during stormy weather. Have a NOAA all-hazards weather radio with a battery back-up and a tone alert or an ALERT FM with you at all times. Heed predictions of a severe thunderstorm or tornado. A **watch** means conditions are favorable and a **warning** means that it has been spotted on radar or by a SKYWARN volunteer. A severe thunderstorm means that it may contain either hail 1 inch or greater, winds of 58 miles per hour, or a tornado. When a watch is issued, make sure everyone can get to a “safe place.” When the warning is issued, head to a safe place immediately. Underground in a basement or storm shelter is best. If not, go to a sturdy building to the most interior room on the lowest floor, away from windows. Cover yourself with a helmet, blankets, pillows, or mattress. Be sure to take your pets, too. If you are in a vehicle, get out and head for a sturdy building. If no building is available, lie down in a ditch. If you are in a mobile home, get out and head for a sturdy building. If you are in a highrise building, get to the lowest floor and into an interior hallway. **Plan now to have a “safe place” at home, work and all other places you frequent and survive severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.**



Midmorning on April 18, 2014 neighbors living in the 1500 block of Carr Avenue near South Willett in Midtown Memphis were asked to quickly evacuate due to an accidental gas main rupture at an unoccupied home, according to WREG News. No injuries were reported and approximately 30 residents were allowed back in their homes after a few hours. The Shelby County Office of Preparedness reminds citizens to “call 811 before you dig.” Find out ahead of time if utilities are buried beneath your property. The service is free. The information can also be obtained online at <http://www.tenn811.com>. If you suspect a pipeline gas leak, call the MLGW emergency phone number at 901.528.4465 immediately from a safe location. Give your name, location, and description of the leak. You can also call 9-1-1 to report the leak. Do not remain in the area. Do not turn on or off light switches or light a flame.



Know The Elements. Make Your Plan.

The Weather Channel's "Connect with Weather" is inviting you to go online to create your family's emergency plan. In a matter of minutes, this web site will lead you through 3 easy steps to create a written plan for emergencies. Prompts to be filled out include "Weather Where we Live," "Our Family Information," and "Our Family Members." After filling out pertinent information, click "save" and your plan is created! To create your online plan, visit: www.connectwithweather.com/create-your-plan.

Winter Storm Debris Removal Assistance



Photo caption: winter storm debris

The March 2, 2014 winter storm debris can be picked up in Shelby County's unincorporated areas until June 20, 2014. Residents are asked to stack debris along roadsides. The items need be no longer than 6 feet and no wider than 2 feet. To request pick up please call the Shelby County Public Works Department at 901.222.7705 or the Shelby County Mayor's Action Center at 901.222.2300

Preparedness Training



Photo caption: Shelby County CERT graduates at 1075 Mullins Station Road. This energetic class, taught by Eugene Jones, completed 2 days of preparedness training on April 12, 2014. Congratulations!



Photo captions: Left: a CERT student extinguishes a small fire during Fire Suppression



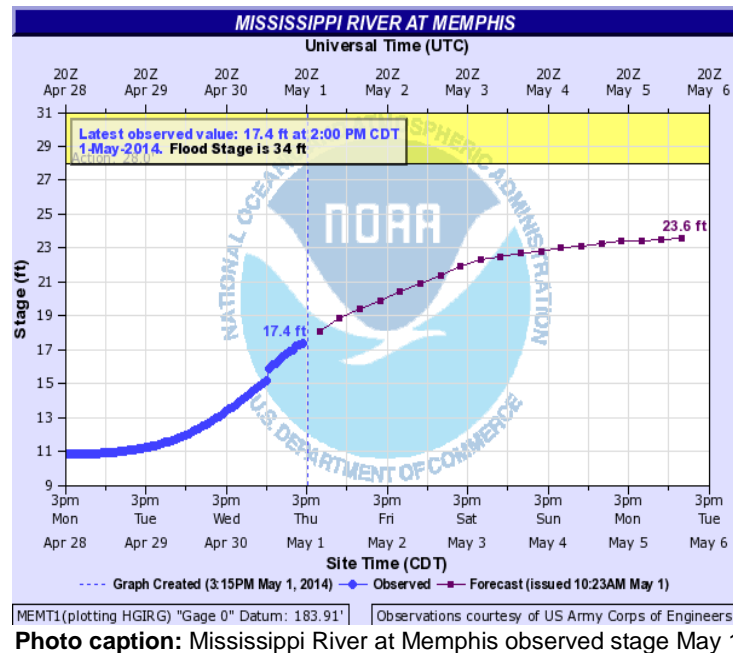
Right: CERT students learn how to make a sling during Medical First Aid

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training: Held on two consecutive Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Shelby County Office of Preparedness, 1075 Mullins Station Road, Memphis, TN 38134. Free. Pre-registration required. To register email: Eugene.jones@shelbycountyttn.gov.

Hazardous Materials Awareness Training Course: Wednesday, May 21, 2014, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 a.m., 1075 Mullins Station Road, Memphis, TN 38134, Shelby County Emergency Operations Center. Free. To register contact Shannon.towery@shelbycountyttn.gov or 901.222.6714.

Amateur Radio Training: Technician (entry level) training for “ham radio.” Six Mondays starting July 14 – August 18, 2014, 6:15 – 9:30 p.m. , Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 6865 Poplar Pike, Memphis, TN. FCC exam given August 11. Manual is \$29.95. FCC exam is \$15. Will take 10 – 15 hours of additional study to pass exam. Pre-registration required. Contact: Joe Lowenthal at 901.628.4318.

May Anniversary of Historic River Flooding



According to the National Weather Service Advanced Hydrological Prediction Service, the Mississippi River at Memphis registers 17.4 feet on May 1, 2014 and is rising. Major flood stage is 48 feet.



Photo caption: Flooded boat ramp at Mud Island May 6, 2011

Shelby County citizens are reminded of the anniversary of the historic major flooding on May 1, 2010 and the “flood of the century” of May 2011. Both flooding events caused wide-spread property damage, the necessary evacuation of citizens living in low lying areas, and sheltering of hundreds of citizens by the Shelby Cares Faith Based initiative.

The Mississippi River at Memphis crested on May 5, 2011 at 48.03 feet. The highest recorded crest before the 2011 floods was 48.7 feet in 1937. As a proactive response to predicting flooding events, in 2010, the River Watch initiative was created, which includes the National Weather Service, the Office of Preparedness, the University of Memphis, and the Corps of Engineers. Additional river gauges have been installed on the tributaries to give these agencies 24/7 “real time” water level data. River Watch does not predict excessive major flooding for 2014 at this time for the Mississippi River at Memphis. The usual spring minor flooding may occur due to excessive rainfall and upriver snow melt.

Tornado Alley in 3D!



Tornado Alley is an exciting 3D film about the awesome power of tornadoes and the scientists who chase them. Showing now through November 21, 2014 at the Memphis Pink Palace Museum, 3050 Central, Memphis, TN. Tickets: \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors, \$7 for children. Call 901.636.2362 for more information.

do  thing

“Small Monthly Steps to Get Prepared for an Emergency”

May do1thing: Work, School, Community!

School safety: Check with your child’s school to learn about their preparedness plans. Find out the school’s procedures for disasters and how they will shelter-in-place or evacuate and what the parent’s responsibilities are for those events.

Work safety: Meet with your co-workers to make a plan for every hazard and threat. Create an emergency kit for your work area with enough emergency supplies for everyone. Hold an annual drill for earthquake, flooding, and tornado. Know where the Automatic External Defibrillators (AED’s) and ABC fire extinguishers are located in your work place.

Community safety: Work with your neighborhood leaders to have a plan in place for unexpected events in your neighborhood. Create an email alert system within your neighborhood watch group to let everyone know what to do when a disaster has occurred.

For more information on monthly tips to get prepared, visit www.do1thing.com.

Preparedness / Safety Resources

Shelby County Office of Preparedness: www.staysafeshelby.us, 901.515.2525.  

Shelby County Citizen Corps: citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov,  www.facebook-shelby-county-citizen-corps

Shelby County, Tennessee: www.shelbycountyttn.gov

Shelby County Medical Reserve Corps: www.shelbycountymrc.org

Shelby County Office of Preparedness Storm Shelter Registry: Kimberlyn.bouler@shelbcountyttn.gov

Shelby Cares - Faith-based Sheltering Initiative: Terry.donald@shelbycountyttn.gov

Shelby County CERT Program: Eugene.Jones@shelbycountyttn.gov

ALERTFM: www.alertfm.com

Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI): www.ceri.memphis.edu

Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC): www.cusec.org

Citizen Corps: www.citizencorps.gov

Department of Homeland Security: www.dhs.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): www.fema.gov

FEMA's Ready America, Business, Kids: www.ready.gov

Memphis Light, Gas and Water (MLGW): www.mlwgw.org, 901.544.6549, Outages: 901.544.6500, downed lines or gas leaks: 901.528.4465. Outage Map on line: www.mlwgw.com/residential/outagemap

Call 811 Before You Dig or visit www.tenn811.com.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): www.floodsmart.gov

National Weather Service (NWS): www.weather.gov, NWS Memphis: 901.544.0399

Ready Tennessee: www.tn.gov/homelandsecurity/getready.shtml

Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA): www.tema.gov

Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT): www.tdot.state.tn.us, 1.877.244.0065, call 511

United States Fire Administration (USFA): www.usfa.fema.gov

United States Geological Society (USGS): www.usgs.gov

Weather Channel: www.weather.com

EMERGENCY: 9-1-1